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MADAME BERTHE MARX.

MADAME BERTHE MARX, born in Paris, is a member of a family that for the last century has been distinguished in different branches of the musical art. Her father, for forty years connected as violoncellist with the renowned orchestras of the Opera and Conservatoire in the capital of France, placed her, at the early age of three years, to practice the pianoforte. The child's progress was so rapid as to astonish her relatives and their friends, by whom she was regarded as a veritable "prodigy;" and this estimate of her abilities was confirmed by the public when, at five years of age, she made her first appearance at a concert to play in an important classical work.

The success attending the child's efforts did not, however, blind her parents to the necessity of bestowing on her a thorough education in the art. To carry out this excellent purpose, they, foregoing immediate advantages of a pecuniary nature, kept her to daily studies until she arrived at the age of nine, when she played before Auber, then the director of the Paris Conservatoire, who was so charmed with her skill as to admit her as a pupil without the delay caused by passing through the habitual preliminary examinations - a favour rarely accorded to students. Entering the class of Madame Rety, the girl Berthe gained in succession the prizes awarded for proficiency in solfege and harmony, as well as the medals for pianoforte playing. Eventually she was advanced to Henri Herz' class and became his favourite pupil, and under his guidance obtained, at fifteen years of age, the first prize of the Conservatoire, Not only had she acquired technical skill, but also had cultivated a true appreciation of the poetic qualities of classical music. Being thus thoroughly equipped the young lady started upon a professional career which is leading her to enduring fame. In all the musical centres of France and Belgium she has appeared with ever-increasing success.

During a professional visit to Brussels, in 1885, she had the good fortune to play in association with Señor Sarasate, and so struck was the famous artist with her ability, that he declared he had rarely been so well supported in his performances as he then was by her pianoforte playing. Since that time Madame Berthe Marx has been engaged by Señor Sarasate to play at some hundreds of concerts given by him in continental towns, and was also associated with him in seventy-five concerts held in 1890 in America. It is scarcely necessary to record her performances in this country, where for the last six years she has appeared at Señor Sarasate's recitals, both in the metropolis and in the provinces. Mention should, however, be made of the remarkable success achieved by Madame Marx in the series of concerts lately given by her in St. James's Hall, at the last of which she played in Beethoven's Concerto in E flat major, Emile Bernard's Fantasie in E, for pianoforte and orchestra, Saint-Saëns' Concerto in G minor, and Liszt's Concerto in E flat major,

CURRENT NOTES.

Whatever may be urged as to the expediency of producing novelties at the annual Festival of the Three Choirs, the Worcester committee can point to the gathering of 1893 as a proof that the supporters are perfectly satisfied with standard compositions the worth of which they know. In the face of the official figures put forward as the result of the offertory at the latest festival on behalf of the widows and orphans of the poorer clergy within the dioceses of Worcester, Hereford, and Gloucester, it seems absurd to contend that the life of the meeting depends upon "progress"—a term in this instance meaning the introduction of entirely new works by more or less celebrated musicians. Never was there a scantier show of novelty than was presented at Worcester between the 12th and 15th ult., and yet the total collection for the charity that is the raison d'live of the meeting reached £1,042, thus exceeding by £40 the amount contributed in 1890, and by nearly £70 the collection in 1887, in each of which years an important oratorio was heard for the first time. It is announced, too, that further donations are expected, so that the stewards hope to hand over to the charity one of the largest amounts on record. Enterprise is all very well in its way, but when, as in this case, Elijah draws to the cathedral 2,879 persons, the Hymn of Praise 2,746, and Messiah 3,148, the Worcester committee may with justification hesitate to indulge in experiments.

Regarded as a whole, the artistic issue was not so satisfactory as the financial. The choir, though re-inforced by a large contingent of Yorkshire singers, often left much to be desired in the matters of attack and solidity, whilst their rendering of the Baal and other dramatic choruses in Mendelssohn's sacred masterpiece was singularly tame and colourless. Madame Albani, Miss Anna Williams, Madame Belle Cole, Messrs. Edward Lloyd (at his best) and Watkin Mills strove to stimulate the chorus to energy, but their zealous endeavours were only occasionally successful. Mr. Blair conducted unostentatiously, and the London band was of course equal to its work. A pleasing element of the performance was the careful and expressive singing of Miss Jessie King as assistant contralto soloist. The choir did better the same evening (the 12th) in Israel in Egypt, which was prefaced by Beethoven's Seventh Symphony; rather a strange selection for such a purpose.

Bach's great Mass in B minor, despite the employment of such special instruments as trumpets on the old German model, and oboes d'amore, in order that the work might be given as nearly as possible according to the composer's intention, attracted less than half the numbers subsequently drawn to Messiah. The rendering all round can only be described as moderate. The next morning (the 14th) Dr. Hubert Parry conducted his fine work, 30h, which made even a deeper impression upon its listeners than at Gloucester last year. The lamentations—quarter of an hour long—of the patient hero were again feelingly delivered by Mr. Plunket Greene, and during the equally extended following chorus attention was undiminished. This was the highest compliment that could be paid to this admirable example of modern English musicianship. The Last Judgment formed the second half of the programme. In the evening Madame Albani and Mr. Edward Lloyd sang splendidly in The Hymn of Praise, the unforced melody of which was welcome after the gloomy grandeur of Brahms's German Requiem. In

Messiah, on the final day, the chief solos were taken by Madame Albani, Mrs. Hutchinson, Miss Hilda Wilson, Mr. E. Lloyd, Mr. Plunket Greene, and Mr. Brereton.

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The one evening concert (the 13th) in the Public Hall had for its most interesting feature Dr. Hubert Parry's "Orchestral Piece," composed expressly for the festival. No particulars of the work were given, the compiler of the word-book having apparently been too engrossed with a dull symphonic poem, "Gretchen im Dom," by the recently deceased Saxon composer, Carl August Fischer, to look at anything beyond. The details concerning Fischer, for which few cared, occupied a page and a half, but Dr. Parry's work was simply stated to be an "Orchestral Piece." Happily the audience by hearty applause made amends for this neglect. The piece is intended as an overture to a tragedy, and consists of two movements without break, a pathetic lento, sustained by the strings and softer wood wind, leading into a turbulent allegro, as though the serenity of love had been suddenly checked by some malign influence. The principal strain suggests highly wrought sentiment and may be accepted as the appeal of some sensitive and affectionate nature. It is penned in Dr. Parry's soundest and ripest style, and is sure to be soon heard elsewhere. The rendering by the band, under the composer's conductorship, was commendable, and a word of praise is also due with respect to the execution of Schubert's "Unfinished Symphony" and of a selection from Sullivan's engaging Tempest music.

Two rather notable events have marked the course of the Promenade Concerts at Covent Garden Theatre. Mr. Sims Reeves has emerged from a retirement of a little over two years' duration, and has demonstrated that certain ballads are still within his vocal means. The septuagenarian tenor was received with a warmth of feeling indicating that the public were inclined to ignore the "farewell" in May, 1891, at the Royal Albert Hall, and were glad to hear the veteran once more sing "Tom Bowling," "The Bay of Biscay," "The Jolly Young Waterman" (into which he throws much sly humour), and a few other ditties.

The second incident deserving record was the introduction, in cantata form, of Saint-Saëns's Biblical opera, Samson et Dalila, a work last year added to the répertoire of the Paris Grand Opera, but originally written more than a couple of decades previously. It thus belongs to a period when the influence upon the composer of the school of Wagner was less pronounced than at the present time. There is nothing particularly sacred in the style of the music—not so much as might be supposed, considering the talented composer's connection with the Church, indeed, but for some of the names of characters and places being culled from Holy Writ, both the libretto and the score might pass for those of ordinary romantic opera. As presented on the stage, the action of the first act, in which the doughty Samson slays Abimelech, the Philistine official, for sneering at the Israelites, a proceeding that leads to the revolt of the chosen people, is bristling, and the leading situations receive appropriate musical accom-The second act contains the love strains of the infatuated Samson, over whom the heroine, a dancing priestess, Dagon, obtains such a comparatively easy victory. Here the glow of passion is depicted in the orchestra with that command of instrumental resource the composer has always manifested. In the third act the piteous plight of the fallen hero is contrasted with the semi-barbaric exultation of the Philistines, and the culminating tragedy is worked up in an effective manner. Much of the music is eminently striking, but the performance at Covent Garden on the 25th ult. was scarcely calculated to reveal all its best points. Madame Sanz and M. Lafargue did not sustain the parts of Dalila and Samson respectively, as had been hoped, and avowedly "at a few hours' notice" Miss Edith Miller and Mr. Bernard Lane consented to take their places. take their places. Both singers, we may be sure, did their best under the circumstances, but such responsible work as fell to their share is not to be rapidly mastered. Mr.

Eugène Oudin sang the music of the High Priest of Dagon with dignity and dramatic force, and Mr. Magrath ably doubled two minor characters. The chorus sang fairly well, the band strove to compensate for shortcomings in other directions, and Mr. F. H. Cowen loyally did his duty as conductor. It cannot be said, however, that those among the audience who were absolutely ignorant of the work could have formed an adequate estimate of its qualities as a sacred drama, whether in platform or stage guise.

THE incidental music, expressly composed by Mr. Edward German for Mr. H. A. Jones's play, The Tempter, at the Haymarket Theatre, has not the distinctiveness that entitled his accompanying strains to Richard III. and Henry VIII. to hearty approval. The opportunities, perhaps, are not so great, since the tone of the play is almost uniform from beginning to end. A weird theme typical of the Tempter (otherwise Satan) and a love motive are frequently used, and generally with excellent effect, but at a first hearing the entracte music fails to make a powerful impression upon the mind, albeit a considerable amount of skill is manifest.

According to report, the new Gilbert-Sullivan opera at the Savoy Theatre is to be a parody of some of our national social observances—the main idea being the return of a South Pacific Princess (who has been educated at Girton) to her island home with sundry officials who are part and parcel of British life of to-day. Her attempt to completely re-organise her father's kingdom according to European notions leads to amusing scenes—one of which is a "Drawing Room" held by the Princess's half-savage father. This character is to be played by Mr. Rutland Barrington, and Miss Nancy McIntosh will be the Princess.

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The conductors and secretaries of the musical societies of Gloucestershire foregathered in Handel Hall, Cheltenham, on Thursday, September 7th, for the purpose of establishing a "County of Gloucester Festival Association." It is understood that the main objects of the Association are to unite the societies of the County, to bring the members thereof together on special occasions, and by judiciously augmenting the orchestral and choral forces at the disposal of each society, to enable it to give efficient performances of works by the great masters. The utility of such an organisation was first recognised by Mr. J. A. Mathews, the conductor of the Cheltenham Festivals, who for the last ten years has by word and deed been engaged in enforcing his views upon his professional brethren. That it will prove to their advantage is beyond doubt. Still experience tells one that there are obstacles in the way of success. How to allay the jealousies which at all times undermine the prosperity of musical unions will cause much anxiety.

There was, however, at the meeting over which Mr. C. Lee Williams presided, no fear expressed of the fatal blight falling upon the newly formed body. The prevailing tone of the proceedings was that of joy at the birth of a new society. A committee consisting of the conductors and secretaries of all the societies of the union was appointed. Mr. C. Lee Williams was unanimously elected hon. treasurer, and Mr. J. A. Mathews hon. secretary. The Association commenced its public career on Thursday last at the Musical Festival held in Tewkesbury Abbey. It will have still wider scope for the display of its skilful resources at the Cheltenham Triennial Festival to be held in the third week of the present month.

THAT Worcestershire will speedily follow the example set by Gloucestershire is the wish of true lovers of music. It was a subject of regret to them that some eighty singer had to be brought from a northern county to assist in the performance of oratorios included in the scheme of the festival held last month in the "faithful city," Surely

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the example ors of music. ghty singers assist in the aeme of the y." Surely the choral music appointed for the 170th "Meeting of the Three Choirs" was not so strange and difficult as to be altogether beyond the capacity of amateurs residing in Worcester. If they are really incompetent the blame rests entirely on those who have neglected to turn the abundant vocal resources of the city to good account. It is in the practice room of choral societies, and not in the nave of the cathedral, that the festival chorister, and the festival conductor, too, must be trained.

MR. EDWARD LLOYD has received an offer of engagement to sing at the Musical Festival to be held in Cincinnati in the spring of next year. Whether the pecuniary allurements will prove sufficiently strong to constrain him to forego the comforts of home, we cannot say. But if the wishes of his London friends and admirers be consulted he will remain here, since they are loth to consent to his departure at the beginning of the summer concert season.

MR. GEORGE GROSSMITH'S provincial tour is proving a great success, the audiences being large and the applause enthusiastic. His American sketch, the smart novelty in the "Humorous and Musical Entertainment," provokes unbounded merriment.

It is expected that Madame Antoinette Sterling will arrive in London on Sunday next. Though successful from an artistic point of view, the progress of her Australian tour was interrupted by the visitation of a dire calamity. That she is bearing the heavy load of grief with the fortitude of a true Christian will not surprise those who know her strength of character. When informed that the illness of her husband was taking a dangerous turn she was on tour, far away from him. "I was ready," she is reported to have said, "to forfeit everything and come back, but my husband told me to go on, and I went simply to keep faith with the public. In Auckland I got a telegram stating my husband was convalescent and progressing rapidly. Animated by the good tidings I sang at Christchurch one night with even more than usual effect. In the morning the news came of the death of my husband. On the previous Tuesday I had had a vision of my husband. It was on the same day he said to the doctor that the tour was long and time was passing slowly. At that very hour my husband came into my room and tenderly embraced me. I saw him as real as I have seen anything in this world. The night I got the bad news I dismissed the audience and abandoned the rest of the tour. I wanted to finish it, because my song is my life; it is part of my existence; and I know my husband wanted me to go on."

To sing with a broken heart is indeed a sad experience. Weeks have, however, elapsed since the mournful event took place, and Time no doubt has already done much to close the wounds. Occupation will surely assist in the healing process. We learn, therefore, with satisfaction that Madame Antoinette Sterling will start on the 9th inst. on a provincial tour. Mr. Santley, with health renewed by his visit to South Africa, will form a prominent member of the concert party arranged by Mr. N. Vert.

It is announced that Mr. Thomas Lea Southgate has finished the compilation of a "Table of Notable English Musicians," from the Norman Conquest to the present time. The list includes the names only of eminent theorists, composers, and executants.

Ar the Gaiety Theatre M. Audran's comic opera, La Mascotte, has at length been substituted for the more loosely strung together pieces which have so long done duty on the stage of that largely-patronised house. It has afforded Miss Florence St. John an opportunity of appearing at her best, or, at any rate, in a work with a merry story allied to pleasant music. The part of the heroine, Bettina, is just suited to the lively actress, and the airs are well adapted to show off the fine qualities of her voice.

M. Hervé's comic opera, Mam'zelle Nitouche, was, early in last month, performed a few times at the Trafalgar Theatre, the part of the heroine being played by Miss Marie Elba, a young Swedish artist.

An interesting feature in the production at Daly's Theatre, on the 3rd inst., of Lord Tennyson's play, The Foresters, will be presented in the performance of the incidental music composed to it by Sir Arthur Sullivan.

THE additions now being made to Messrs. Erard's pianoforte warehouse, in Marlborough Street, will include a music hall capable of holding four hundred people.

The new Queen's Hall, Langham Place, now approaching completion, has been taken on lease for twelve months by Mr. Farley Sinkins, who purposes giving therein a series of orchestral concerts, under the direction of Mr. Cowen.

SEÑOR SARASATE will, on the 14th inst., commence a series of concerts, to be held in St. James's Hall during the present and two following months. The celebrated artist will, after fulfilling his engagement at the Norwich Festival, start on a provincial tour, arranged by Mr. N. Vert, to extend to the New Year. The great violinist will, as usual, be assisted by the accomplished pianist, Madame Berthe Marx.

SIR CHARLES AND LADY HALLE will be occupied this month on a recital tour of the United Kingdom. On the 2nd prox., Sir Charles will commence the 36th annual season of his Manchester Concerts.

By the death of Sir William Cusins the musical profession has lost a distinguished member. Born in 1833, William George Cusins evinced in childhood a love of sweet sounds, and at the age of ten years showed sufficient capacity to enable him to obtain an appointment as one of the "Children of Her Majesty's Chapel Royal," which in the following year he resigned, in order to proceed to the Brussels Conservatoire to study under Fetis, one of the best known musicians of his day. Whether the boy was led to take this step by the promptings of his own inclinations, or by the desire to pay ready obedience to the will of his kind and sagacious aunt, Mrs. Anderson, there is no evidence to show. There is, however, reason to believe that he benefited by the course pursued. Returning to London, he became a student at the Royal Academy of Music, where he had the advantage of studying the art of composition under Cipriani Potter, the pianoforte under Sterndale Bennett, and the violin under Sainton. At the Academy, William Cusins was twice elected King's Scholar. His first appearance in public was made 1849, when he played the solo in Mendelssohn's Concerto in D minor for pianoforte and orchestra. In the same year he was appointed organist to the Queen's Private Chapel, and about the same period he became organist at the Opera House, where, as a violinist, he played in the orchestra conducted by Michael Costa.

In 1851 Mr. Cusins received the appointment of assistant-professor at the Royal Academy of Music. Putting aside the violin for the pianoforte he gave with gratifying success performances on that instrument at important concerts held, not only in London, but in Paris, Berlin, Leipzig, and Rome. On the retirement of Sterndale Bennett in 1867 from the post of conductor of the Philharmonic Society, Mr. Cusins was advanced to that responsible position, the duties of which he discharged so satisfactorily as to enable him to retain command of the orchestra for upwards of sixteen years. In 1870 he was appointed "Master of the Musicke to the Queen," an office from which, after filling for twenty-three years, he retired in May last. Previous to his resignation the honour of knighthood was conferred on him by Her Majesty. Sir William Cusins was not only a clever

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executant, but also an able composer. Amongst the most notable of his numerous works are the Royal Wedding Serenata (1863); an oratorio, Gideon (1871); and two concert overtures, "Les Travailleurs de la Mer" (1869), and "Love's Labour Lost" (1875).

Sir William was in August last spending his holidays with Lady Cusins in the Engadine, when he was seized with influenza, from the effects of which, after being confined to his bed for a few days, he seemed to be recovering. Suddenly the insidious disease developed symptoms of pneumonia, but so little alarming were they that on the day of his death he partook of a hearty meal, and then fell asleep. While in that state he passed peacefully away. Those who had the privilege of being associated with him in professional occupations will ever mourn the loss of a worthy leader and faithful comrade. ...

THE prospectus of the forthcoming series of Saturday concerts at the Crystal Palace has been awaited without the least apprehension of any declension from the high standard of merit set up in the past. Like all things else, the institution, for such the Saturday concerts must be called, had its period of growth; but maturity was so quickly reached, and has been so long maintained, that only a few of its present supporters know anything of the failings and imperfections of its infancy. Those who do, and those only, can form an idea of the labour bestowed on it by Mr. August Manns. To his fostering care and skilful guidance the institution owes its world-wide fame. As in former years, new works form an interesting As in former years, new works form an interesting feature in the prospectus. Among them are an orchestral ballad, "Durand," by Mr. Godfrey Pringle; a prelude to the "Eumenides," by Mr. W. Wallace; a concert overture, "Youth," by Mr. Henry Hiles; an overture, "The Fire Worshippers," by Mr. Bantock; and a "Cradle Song" for orchestra, by Mr. C. H. Couldery.

In addition to the above named compositions to be performed for the first time in public, there are the novelties announced in the scheme of the Norwich Festival; novelties announced in the scheme of the Norwich Festival; and also two other unfamiliar pieces, a violoncello Concerto by Klengel, and an orchestral version of the "Nachtgesang" in Wagner's Tristan. But well approved works of the great composers form the bulk of the programmes. This is right and proper, for it is in the masterpieces of art that cultured amateurs find their highest enjoyment. For the efficient interpretation of solo music, the best available artists have been engaged. The first concert of the season takes place on the 14th inst.

For the Norwich Festival, which commences its proceedings in St. Andrew's Hall, on Tuesday, the 3rd inst., a most interesting programme has been prepared. Amongst the absolute novelties contained therein are a romantic legend, The Water Lily, written by Mr. Joseph Bennett and composed by Mr. F. H. Cowen; a Symphony in A minor by Mr. Edward German; a cantata, The Mr. A. R. Gault, a Polich Reputation for minor than the state of the Una, by Mr. A. R. Gaul; a Polish Fantasie for pianoforte and orchestra, by M. Paderewski; and a cantata,
The Wishing Bell, by Mr. J. F. Barnett. The
oratorios selected for performance are Handel's Messiah, Mendelssohn's St. Paul, and Dr. Hubert Parry's Judith. The list of works also comprises Dr. Mackenzie's suite for violin, "Pibroch"; Sullivan's dramatic cantata, The Golden Legend; Saint-Saën's Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso; Randegger's Scena ed Aria, Medea; and Horace Hill's overture, "Yew Barrow"; together with Sullivan's Imperial March, and Mendelssohn's Italian-Symphony. Under the direction of the accomplished Symphony. Under the direction of the accomplished conductor, Mr. Alberto Randegger, the preliminary London rehearsals took place at the Royal Academy of Music, on Thursday, September 28th, and two following days. ...

AT the Cheltenham Musical Festival to be held in the third week of this month the following new works wan, under the direction of their respective composers, be unable to make use, unable to make use.

If business letters should be addressed to the Publishers. It busine

for orchestra by Mr. Lane Wilson; and an orchestral Suite by Sir Herbert Oakeley.

THE programme of the Hanley Festival to be held on the 19th and 20th of the present month, includes Mendelssohn's Elijah, Smart's Bride of Dunkerron, and Berlioz's Faust.

ALL the works announced for performance at the Bristol Musical Festival, to be held in the fourth week in October, are well known and universally esteemed. The list includes, we are glad to see, S. S. Wesley's superbanthem, "The Wilderness."

CORRESPONDENCE.

To the Editor of THE LUTE.

SIR,-A writer on musical events in one of the evening SIR,—A writer on musical events in one of the evening newspapers has lately taken to scolding vocalists for keeping the public, as regard art, in a degraded state, by the singing of old songs. Will you believe, Sir, that I glory in the crime? During the period (pray don't imagine I am an elderly lady) that I have had the honour of serving the British public in the concert-room I have continually been singing Arne's "Where the Bee Sucks," and other soprano airs of a similar description. Whether I have in that way been pandering to a low taste I leave others to decide. But if I have to suffer the newspaper lash for doing so. I shall still have the satisfaction of knowing that decide. But if I have to suffer the newspaper lash for doing so, I shall still have the satisfaction of knowing that in the commission of the deed I have afforded my auditor's much innocent pleasure. Then I am told that it is almost equally absurd to use in the concert-room songs by living English musicians, since they are, with one exception, nothing more than a crowd of feeble tune spinners. The discoverer of the "exception" has dragged into such light as he can throw upon it a name which I hope in future will not fail to reflect the brilliancy of its owner's

No doubt the newspaper writer has made it clear to himself that there are no songs produced by Englishmen worth a pin. He has no hesitation in saying that if a singer want a really good article, he or she should go to Germany for it; and even then he doubts whether it can be obtained outside the Schumann stores. Now, I amyself a sincere admirer of Schumann's instrumental works, but I cannot say he has been equally successful in vocal music. At any rate I do not feel, and cannot, therefore, make others feel its beauty. As far as I am concerned I am always glad to leave its interpretation to Germans. Were I to attempt the task I might be told that only a Teuton can successfully accomplish it. Perhaps I have been wrong in studying in the Italian, instead of in I have been wrong in studying in the Italian, instead of in the German school of singing. If so, the mischief has after all not proved far-reaching. I may have lost thereby the patronage of a few, and missed the praises of a newspaper—but what of that? An English singer would indeed be badly off had he to rely upon a little sect of asthetes for support, instead of upon the general public. British audiences enjoy above all things their own old songs which have for theme the love of home and country; and those who sing them with heart and voice are, as I can testify, held high in public favour.

I am, Sir, yours respectfully,

A SINGER OF ENGLISH SONGS.

West Kensington, September 26th, 1893.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Letters connected with the literary department of this Journal must be addressed to the EDITOR.

Communications intended for insertion will receive no notice union accompanied by the name and address of the sender.

GIVE UNTO THE LORD, O YE KINDREDS OF THE PEOPLE." Anthem for Four Voices

CHARLES DARNTON salm 96, verses 7, 8,9,11,12,13. LONDON: PATEY & WILLIS, 44, GT MARLBOROUGH ST, W. Maestoso. . 110 . RGAN. SOPRANO. CONTRALTO. un to the Lord Kin - dreds of the Give TENOR. BASS. Lord and strength; glo glo and strength; ple, Give un - to the

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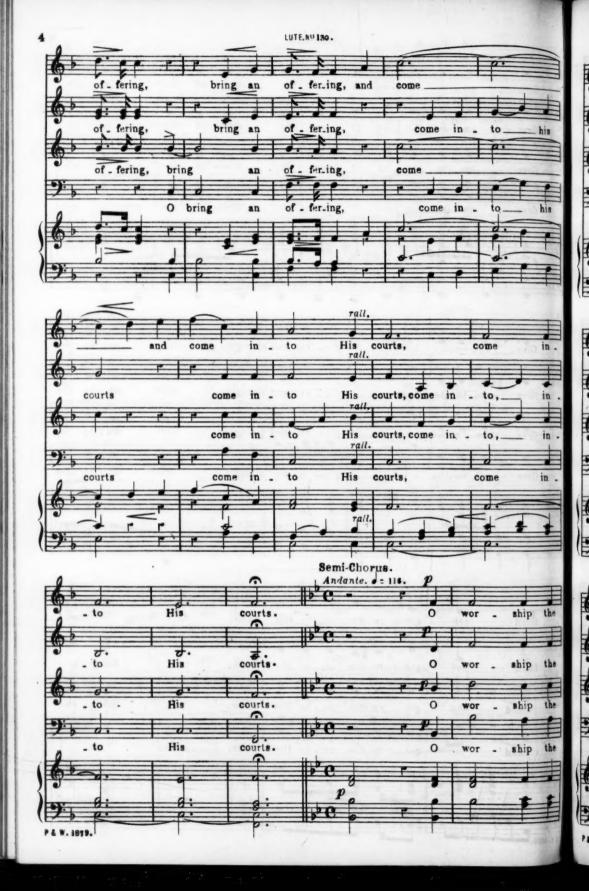
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